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Hocking, Wendy A - Washington, DC

From: LaChance, Susan M - Washington, DC
Sent: Thursday, September 15, 2011 11:54 AM
To: LaChance, Susan M - Washington, DC
Subject: FW: Network Optimization- Communicating with Mailers and the Mailing Industry
Importance: High
Attachments: 2011 September Industry Outreach Toolkit.zip

From: LaChance, Susan M - Washington, DC
Sent: Wednesday, September 14, 2011 5:44 PM
To: Owens, Sharon - Washington, DC
Subject: FW: Network Optimization- Communicating with Mailers and the Mailing Industry
Importance: High

From: Ambrose, Linda J - Washington, DC **On Behalf Of** LaChance, Susan M - Washington, DC
Sent: Wednesday, September 14, 2011 12:52 PM
To: #HQ OFFICERS; #AREA VICE PRESIDENTS
Subject: Network Optimization- Communicating with Mailers and the Mailing Industry
Importance: High

With the announcement of the AMP Feasibility studies, and the supporting Media event, it is inevitable that our customers will have many questions. In an effort to support the needs of the mailing industry, as well as our customer facing employees, a Stakeholder Outreach Toolkit has been created.

Attached find content that has been created to advise mailers about the AMP Feasibility Studies and how they can obtain additional information, and/or provide comments and feedback. Additionally, you will find collateral material to support headquarters and field employees when receiving inquiries regarding the AMP study announcement.

The Stakeholder Outreach toolkit contains the following:

- 1) Sample of letter being mailed on 9/15 to all mailers who are Postalone/permit holders
- 2) Email Alert to Mailing Industry - Pre-September 15 Media Event
- 3) Email Alert to Mailing Industry - Post-September 15 Media Event
- 4) Core language for responding to Customer Inquiries and Call center Agent Scripting
- 5) Q&A for Business Mail Entry and Consumer & Industry Contact offices
- 6) BME signage

The materials in this toolkit can be used to address customer inquiries as a result of the September 15 media event that announces the Postal Service's intent to conduct an Area Mail Processing (AMP) study of mail processing facilities. We anticipate our employees will be receiving several questions as a result of the announcement. We must provide them the tools they need to address customers concerns and ensure they are providing consistent and accurate responses. Please share these materials with all employees within your functional responsibility who may respond to customer inquiries regarding the AMP study announcement.

Susan M. LaChance

12/23/2011

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National Area Mail Processing Studies Frequently Asked Questions

Audience: Consumer & Industry Contact and Business Mail Entry Units

General

What is happening?

On September 15th, the Postal Service announced a national Area Mail Processing (AMP) study to determine if there are opportunities to increase efficiency and improve productivity.

Why is this happening?

We have to match our resources to the volume of mail we have to process. To that end, the Postal Service is conducting Area Mail Processing (AMP) studies to evaluate the consolidation of mail-processing operations.

We recognize the significant employee and community concerns associated with any potential change in postal operations. As we undertake this AMP study, you can be assured we will seek the public's input and give full consideration to any concerns before making a decision.

Who is being studied: The list of facilities being studied is available at <http://about.usps.com/news/facility-studies/welcome.htm>. FAQs and additional information will also be available on this website. Comments can also be submitted on this web page.

Will customers have an opportunity to provide input?

Community meetings will be held in locations where studies are being conducted to give customers the opportunity to offer their input prior to a final decision

Notification for local meetings will be published in local newspapers and at facilities being studied.

What type of improvements might this study identify?

At this time, the Postal Service is only conducting a feasibility study and no decisions have been made. In the event the study identifies opportunity for improvements, the community will be notified. Generally speaking, AMP studies can identify improved efficiency through consolidation of some mail processing operations with a nearby mail processing facility.

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Could this affect mail service to customers?

At this time, the Postal Service is only conducting a feasibility study and no decisions have been made. Our customers will continue to receive the high level of service they have come to expect.

Could we lose our local postmark?

Even if a decision is ultimately made to relocate some mail processing operations, the (CITY NAME) Post Office will continue to provide a local postmark for those customers who want it. Business customers will continue to use their own postage meters and permits with a (CITY NAME) postmark. Business mail of this type is the overwhelming majority of the volume processed.

Could this result in slower mail service?

Providing a high level of service to our customers is a priority for the Postal Service. Should we choose to make changes, we expect them to be transparent to most customers.

Could employees lose their jobs?

Every effort will be made to assist career nonbargaining unit employees released from their positions, and we will reassign affected bargaining unit career employees to other jobs in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements.

When will the AMP study be completed?

From the time the AMP study is announced till the time a decision is made is approximately 5 months. We will notify the community when the AMP proposal is approved for implementation or deemed not feasible.

Business Mail Entry

What about Business Mail Entry units? How many are inside processing facilities being studied?

The Postal Service has Business Mail Entry Units in a significant portion of our processing facilities nationwide. Virtually all of the plants that will be studied have Business Mail Entry Units. During the study phase, the Postal Service will determine the best method to manage the impact on business mailers. This may include increasing acceptance at mailer facilities or moving mail acceptance to other local post office facilities.

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How will the Postal Service communicate proposed plans on plant and BMEU closings?

The proposed network optimization and service standard changes are being communicated through many channels, including: USPS.com, aboutusps.com (aboutusps.com/facilitystudies), RIBBS, the AMP process which includes public meetings, a Federal Register notice, and meetings and discussions between postal officials and mailers.

Will entry procedures be different at optimized plants?

Standard procedures will be followed to accept and verify mail as we do today. BME facilities will manage their operating plans, volume arrival profiles and critical acceptance times to ensure adequate resources and space to accept and verify the mail to meet the needs of mailers.

How will the network optimization studies affect BMEU locations and hours?

BMEU hours and locations will depend primarily on workload and suitable acceptance locations and hours. BME facilities will manage their operating plans, volume arrival profiles and critical acceptance times to ensure adequate resources and space to accept and verify the mail to meet the needs of mailers.

What are the impacts of Business Mail Entry Units (BMEU) since there will be more mail entered at fewer number of places? Can the BMEU handle the load?

BMEUs will still be available at consolidated sites, and/or located at nearby facilities, after mail processing is moved. Reviews of acceptance and verification procedures are ongoing with the industry in an effort to reduce current verification processes. Workloads and operating windows will be reviewed and adjusted as needed.

Does the Postal Service's plan consider the impact of the proposed changes on how customers make their mailings?

Yes, and it will continue to do so throughout this process which is why your feedback is so important. The network study will include a full review of current acceptance operations at impacted facilities. Several factors will be considered including the # of impacted mailers, the # of mailings accepted and logistics associated with the network study.

Will customers have to move their mailing permits if a facility is closed?

Every effort will be made to avoid customers having to move their mailing permits. However, in some cases, customers may be required to move or open new permits.

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Will customers have to pay for new permits if the permits are moved?

In general, a customer will be able to move existing permits at no cost.

What is the Postal Service's plan to counter the congestion issues that will occur once the BMEUs that remain open start dealing with larger entry volumes?

Facility capacity will be considered as a part of network optimization study.

Will BMEU operational hours change if a facility is impacted?

Some BMEU operational hours may change as a result of the network optimization.

Will resources continue to be available to assist BMEU customers impacted by the network optimization?

Yes. Local and District USPS BME staff will provide assistance throughout the process to ensure all customer questions are answered and issues are addressed.

How will the network optimization studies affect BMEU locations and hours?

BMEU hours and locations will depend primarily on workload and suitable acceptance locations and hours. The Postal Service will work with mailers to assess the impact and develop viable solutions.

Who can answer technical questions for mailers, such as whether more binding lines need to be used, and more destinations for printing?

Guidance relating to a mailer's specific capacity/capability will be limited to the information provided during the network study. District Managers, Business Mail Entry will be available to respond to specific questions relating to impacted facilities within their control.

[GENERAL NOTICE OF INTENT TO CONDUCT AMP FEASIBILITY STUDY TO LOCAL MAILERS]
(Use VP Consumer and Industry Affairs Letterhead)



(Name)
(Company Name)
(Street address)
(City, State, ZIP Code)

Dear Mr./Ms. (NAME):

This letter is an informational notice of the U.S. Postal Service's intent to conduct an Area Mail Processing (AMP) study of mail processing facilities to determine whether consolidation of some operations is appropriate.

The Postal Service is facing some of the most difficult challenges in its history. The current economic downturn and continued diversion of mail to the Internet has led to a dramatic 20 percent decline in mail volume since 2007. The decline in mail volume has also meant a decline in postal revenue. As a result, today the Postal Service has not only *more* equipment, personnel and facilities than it needs to process a decreasing amount of mail, but also *less* revenue than it needs to cover the costs of that large processing and delivery network.

The economic reality demands that the Postal Service reduce its network. Aligning postal facilities and resources with the demand for postal services by consolidating postal operations and placing equipment and employees where needed makes sound business sense. To do otherwise would be fiscally irresponsible.

Information about the AMP study process and the facilities that will be studied is available on www.USPS.com. Public input is being solicited as part of the study process and will be considered in the decision-making process. In communities where the Postal Service's initial review supports the business case for changing mail processing operations, public meetings will be held. Additional information will be shared by the Postal Service, and members of the community will be invited to ask questions and provide feedback. Information about additional opportunities to comment on the AMP studies is available at: <http://about.USPS.com/news/facility-studies/welcome.htm>

On behalf of the Postal Service, thank you for the trust you have placed in us over the years to deliver your mail. We appreciate your business, and are working harder than ever to position the Postal Service so that we can continue to serve you for many years to come.

Sincerely,

Susan M. LaChance

USPS National Area Mail Processing Study

This is an informational notice of intent that the United States Postal Service is conducting Area Mail Processing (AMP) studies to evaluate the consolidation of mail processing operations.

Community meetings will be held in locations where studies are being conducted to give customers an opportunity to offer their input prior to a final decision.

The Postal Service will make every possible attempt to minimize the impact for our customers.

Notification of community meetings will be published in local newspapers as well as on signs posted in facilities that will be included in the study.

Information about additional opportunities to comment on the AMP studies is available at:

<http://about.USPS.com/news/facility-studies/welcome.htm>

Core Language

Title: Area Mail Processing Studies

Dear <INSERT NAME or "Customer">,

Thank you for contacting the United States Postal Service.

The Postal Service is facing the most critical period in its history. With the economic downturn and increased diversion to the Internet, mail volumes have dropped drastically. Even when the economy recovers, mail volume is not expected to return to previous peak levels. The mail volume decline has left the Postal Service with a mail processing network that is too large for the amount of mail it now processes.

As a self-supporting government agency that receives no tax dollars for its operating expenses, the Postal Service must rely on the sale of postage and products and services to generate revenue. In the face of unsustainable deficits due to the unprecedented decline in mail volume and loss of revenue, the Postal Service must seek ways to cut costs and reduce the size of its network.

We have to match our resources to the volume of mail we have to process. The fact remains that we have an excess capacity of equipment, staff and facilities to process a declining volume of mail. It is critical that we pursue the realignment of our network in order to improve efficiency and cut costs if the Postal Service is to remain viable.

To that end, the Postal Service is conducting Area Mail Processing (AMP) studies to evaluate the consolidation of mail-processing operations.

We recognize the significant employee and community concerns associated with any potential change in postal operations. As we undertake this AMP study, you can be assured we will seek the public's input and give full consideration to any concerns before making a decision.

Community meetings will be held in locations where studies are being conducted to give customers the opportunity to offer their input prior to a final decision and the Postal Service will make every possible attempt to minimize the impact to our customers.

Thank you for contacting us.

<INSERT NAME OF EMPLOYEE OR OFFICE>

Agent Scripting

Opening: Thank you for contacting the United States Postal Service regarding our recent announcement on Area Mail Processing studies.

Why: We have to match our resources to the volume of mail we have to process. To that end, the Postal Service is conducting Area Mail Processing (AMP) studies to evaluate the consolidation of mail-processing operations.

We recognize the significant employee and community concerns associated with any potential change in postal operations. As we undertake this AMP study, you can be assured we will seek the public's input and give full consideration to any concerns before making a decision.

Who: The list of facilities being studied is available at <http://about.usps.com/news/facility-studies/welcome.htm>. FAQs and additional information will also be available on this website. Comments can also be submitted on this web page.

Upcoming events:

Community meetings will be held in locations where studies are being conducted to give customers the opportunity to offer their input prior to a final decision

Notification for local meetings will be published in local newspapers and at facilities being studied.

Closing: Thank you for contacting us and giving us the opportunity to address your question.



September 15, 2011

INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES
MTAC INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE
PCC CO-CHAIRS
CUSTOMERS, MANAGED ACCOUNTS

SUBJECT: USPS Network Optimization Proposal and Service Standards Changes Proposal

This morning at a national media event in Washington, D.C., the Postal Service proposed sweeping changes to its massive nationwide infrastructure and adjustments to service standards. To make accessing information about these proposals as easy as possible for you, we have created a web page specifically for the industry and mailers at:

<http://about.usps.com/news/facility-studies/welcome.htm>

This web page can be accessed immediately. It contains:

- Link to the media kit, which includes:
 - Press release
 - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs for media)
 - Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (Federal Register)
 - Fact sheets
 - List of processing plants to be studied
- A video from the Postmaster General
- Industry FAQs (in process)

Because the questions and concerns expressed by the industry and mail owners are likely to be more sophisticated and technical than those of consumers and the media, materials will be developed specifically for you. The materials will be updated periodically throughout the Network Optimization study process to include FAQs reflecting the evolution of the process.

The industry and mailers are key stakeholders in everything the Postal Service undertakes. We know that these proposed changes, if implemented, will impact all of you in some way. That is why *together* we will continue to discuss the potential effects of the network optimization proposal and service standards changes, and work toward mutually acceptable solutions wherever possible. The exchange of information, ideas, and concerns that began in general with many of you last month will continue in earnest as the study process evolves and we all have more information.

There are a number of ways to convey your questions, comments and concerns to the Postal Service and others. Public input meetings will be scheduled in locations featuring a processing facility on the new AMP study list released today. An email address has been set up for your use in corresponding with us on the proposed service standard changes that are the subject of the Advance Notice in the Federal Register. The address is industryfeedback@usps.gov.

We will work hard to keep you updated at every step of the way during this process, and to see that your questions, ideas and concerns are reviewed and considered.

On behalf of the Postal Service, I thank you for your ongoing efforts to help keep the mailing industry strong and vibrant.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Susan M. LaChance".

Susan M. LaChance

cc: FAST User Group
PostalOne User Group
PCC Insiders Mailing List
DMM Advisor Mailing List
MTAC Members

SUSAN M. LACHANCE
VICE PRESIDENT
CONSUMER & INDUSTRY AFFAIRS



September 14, 2011

INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES
MTAC INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE
PCC CO-CHAIRS

SUBJECT: Announcement by the Postal Service on September 15, 2011

Tomorrow the Postal Service will hold a press conference to announce a proposal that contemplates dramatic changes to its network of processing facilities and corresponding adjustments to service standards.

Because you are key stakeholders in everything the Postal Service undertakes, you need to be aware of – and involved in shaping – the actions that will be taken at every stage in the process. Perhaps more than any other group of stakeholders, you understand the challenges the Postal Service is facing in both financial and operational terms. We are counting on you to play a major role in the discussions that will follow tomorrow's announcement.

As the Postal Service publicly examines changes to its network and service standards in the coming months – beginning with tomorrow's press conference – you have my commitment to see that your questions are answered, and that you have ready access to the most current information available. I will send you another message tomorrow with links to more extensive information about the proposal and opportunities for providing feedback.

On behalf of the Postal Service, thank you for your continued support and partnership during these challenging times.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan M. LaChance".

Susan M. LaChance